

LETTERS  
TO A  
STUDENT  
IN THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF

*Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

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BY JOHN CLARKE, *K*  
MINISTER OF A CHURCH IN BOSTON.

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## Letter I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

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DEAR SIR,

**Y**OUR superior qualifications for admission into the university give you singular advantages for the prosecution of your studies. That you are ambitious of deserving, before you receive, a degree, is a point which I shall take for granted. Your diligence at school, so gratifying to your friends, forbids the suspicion that you will now disappoint them.

them. Need I inform you, that they entertain the most pleasing expectations of your future improvement ? And can you doubt, that their mortification will be equal to your guilt, if having entered the university with reputation, you leave it with disgrace ?

OF such an ingrateful return for all the expenses of a publick education, I could produce many examples. Long before their academical life had closed, I have known young persons lose all the classical learning which they had acquired at school ; and I have seen them go forth into the world with the formal honours of a scholar,



scholar, but without one qualification to support the character. You can scarcely conceive how easily four years may be consumed in idleness, or wasted in dissipation. Nothing less than the testimony of your own eyes, will convince you how many are guilty of this fatal extravagance.

TIME lost, and money expended to so little purpose, have suggested to some the superior advantages of a private education. It has been supposed, that, under the eye of parents and friends, a youth would be industrious and circumspect ; and, whilst he behaved better, that he would gain more knowledge at home, than at  
the



the university. I am not, however, a convert to this opinion, though supported by many plausible arguments. A private, and a publick education have their respective advantages. And after comparing these advantages with the utmost deliberation, and with impartiality, I must decide in favour of the latter. In a university there are incitements to study, which solitude cannot furnish. There are also peculiar conveniences for the prosecution of philosophical studies. On that publick theatre, emulation produces wonderful effects. And as to morals, they may be preserved, and lost at any place.

place. Of this I am persuaded, that the student at home, and the student at college, are not such different beings in point of innocence; as the solitude of the one, and the social life of the other, would lead us to imagine. Theory, in this instance, is unsupported by fact.

It is not, therefore, with regret, that I address you as a member of the university at Cambridge. You are now placed in a situation to become, what you have often assured me is your ambition, A YOUTH OF LEARNING AND VIRTUE. A disposition to study will early attract the notice of your instructors ; and, whilst

whilst it conciliates their approbation, will secure their assistance. You will have the exquisite pleasure to reflect, that you are at the same time improving yourself, and gratifying your friends. And I shall be not a little flattered, to find that I had penetrated your true character, when I first decided on the vigour of your understanding, and the goodness of your heart.

FAREWELL.

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**Letter II.**

COLLEGE LAWS, FOUNDER,  
BENEFACTORS, &c. &c.

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**I** SUPPOSE, you have been furnished with the college-laws ; have perused them with care ; and have some general idea of the constitution of the university, and of the course of studies which you are destined to pursue. If unprovided, or unacquainted with this code, let me recommend it to your immediate attention. It is a maxim at the university, “ *ignorantia legis neminem excusat.* ”



excusat." Your own good sense will discern the equity of this maxim.

WHILST the laws acquaint you with the constitution, let me give you a concise account of the universality of which you are a member. My motive to this is not merely your own private gratification, but to enable you to satisfy others, who may interrogate you on the subject. Strangers frequently resort to Cambridge; and many of them may wish to collect some information respecting the antiquities of the college, and other peculiarities of that venerable seat of learning. And would it not mortify you to be unprepared



prepared to answer their inquiries ?

HARVARD-UNIVERSITY takes its date from the year 1638 ; and its name, from a respectable minister in a neighbouring town. Though surrounded with dangers, and embarrassed with difficulties of every kind, our ancestors did not forget the interests of learning. By experience they knew its pleasures ; and they could easily calculate its influence, in respect to freedom and religion. Enlightened themselves, they benevolently wished that the rays of science might fall on their descendants. And the wish was excited by a rational conviction, that as long as

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learning

learning should be cultivated, virtue and freedom would not want advocates.

THESE sentiments will easily account for the early establishment of HARVARD-COLLEGE. In the year 1636, the General Court of Massachusetts contemplated a publick school at Newtown; and appropriated four hundred pounds to that object. But Mr. JOHN HARVARD, minister of Charlestown, dying two years after, increased this sum by the addition of a great part of his own estate, valued at seven or eight hundred pounds. Thus endowed, the school was exalted to a college. Like those of Europe,



Europe, it took the name of its founder. And Newtown was changed to Cambridge, in compliment to the college; and in memory of the place where many of our fathers received their education.

DEGREES were first conferred in 1642. The thesis published that year is a literary curiosity. You will find it in Hutchinson's history. For the persons, who have since graduated, I must refer you to the latest catalogue. You will there find some of the most dignified names in the United States. As sons of the university, some have obtained its honours; on others, they have been conferred



conferred as the just reward of their learning and patriotism. It must be pleasing, and I think useful, to consider the many illustrious characters, which have been formed at Cambridge. With such objects before you, can you want examples to imitate, or virtues to admire?

You have been introduced to the founder of the university: perhaps, you may wish to be acquainted with some of its other benefactors and friends. Among these, STOUGHTON, HOLDEN, HOLLIS, HANCOCK, BOYLSTONE, HERSEY, CUMING, ALFORD, BOWDOIN, and ERVING, hold a most honourable place. To these illustrious

ous benefactors I may add HOPKINS and DUDLEY. These great names have often inspired the college-poet ; and enriched the exercises of the young orator. And on publick occasions, I know not how genius and eloquence can be better employed, than in celebrating the patrons of science.

In 1699, the Hon. WILLIAM STROUGHTON, Lieutenant Governour of the province, erected a hall for the accommodation of students. It bore his name, and filled the space between Harvard and Massachusetts halls. Holden-chapel commemorates the pious liberality of the widow and

daughters of SAMUEL HOLDEN, one of the directors of the bank of England. In 1745 it was erected at their expense. THOMAS HOLLIS, of London, and a nephew of the same benevolent disposition, will rank high among the friends of learning. Two professorships, one of Theology, the other of Mathematicks and Natural Philosophy, many valuable books, which now adorn the library, and other donations, are fruits of their munificence. Hollis-hall, erected in 1762, received its denomination from the publick gratitude to these patrons. The professorship of Oriental languages will remind you of THOMAS

HANCOCK

HANCOCK, Esq. of Boston, by whom it was founded. You will also find his name in the library, to which he generously contributed ; and his portrait in the philosophy - room, which his heir, the late Governour, beside executing his uncle's liberal intentions, furnished in a manner suited to its elegant destination. This room is adorned with portraits of three other benefactors to the university, taken at full length.

THE well-intended donations of NICHOLAS BOYLSTONE, EZEKIEL and ABNER HERSEY, and JOHN CUMING, do honour to their memory. The first laid a partial foundation  
for



for a professorship of Rhetorick and the Belles Lettres. The others, to promote their favourite studies, devoted their benefactions to a Medical establishment. From the estate of JOHN ALFORD, an appropriation has been made for the future support of a professor of Politicks and Morality. The late WILLIAM ERVING bequeathed one thousand pounds for the encouragement of Chemistry, and Materia Medica.

To induce graduates to reside at the university, and there to prosecute theological studies, EDWARD HOPKINS made a donation, which is now vested in lands. Part of the income



come arising from these lands is the reward of such residents as shall exhibit their progress in divinity by a course of dissertations. Impressed with the great importance of ascertaining the principles of Natural Religion, and defending those of Revelation, of exposing the errors of Popery, and maintaining the validity of Presbyterian Ordination, the Hon. Judge DUDLEY founded an annual lecture. The lecturer is chosen by trustees ; and receives his pecuniary reward from the college treasurer.

FROM the benefactors, it may be proper to make a transition to the governors of the university. The  
board

board of Overseers is composed of the First Magistrate of the commonwealth, of the Lieutenant Governour, of the Council and Senate, of the President of the society, and of the Congregational Ministers of Boston, Charlestown, Cambridge, Watertown, Roxbury, and Dorchester. The President, five Fellows, and Treasurer, constitute the corporation. The immediate government is exercised by the President, the Professors residing in Cambridge, the four Tutors, and the Librarian. There is a French instructor, and also professors of Anatomy, and Surgery, the Theory and Practice of Physick, and

and Chemistry and Materia Medica. But being unconfined to the university, they are necessarily discharged from any part in its immediate government.

You have seen the library ; and have taken notice of the very ancient books which fill one of the alcoves. These books were rescued from the flames, which, in 1764, consumed the old college. But you will not regret this accident, when you observe the elegant and commodious structure, which was immediately raised at the publick expence. A library, consisting of fifteen thousand volumes, will amply compensate the  
loss

loss of that which perished in the flames. The museum, though its ancient treasures are irrecoverable, is daily enriched by donations from every quarter of the globe. And the philosophical apparatus yields not to any one on the continent.

FROM its early establishment till within a very few years, the university not only enjoyed the patronage of government, but experienced its liberality. Beside erecting Massachusetts, Hollis, and Harvard-halls, the General Court made an annual grant, which reduced the expenses of a public education. The grant is now withheld; and the instructors receive



ceive their support from the college-funds, and assessments on the students.

THUS have I given you a concise account of the oldest seminary of learning in the United States. I hope, I have been so explicit as to satisfy your curiosity, without being so minute as to tire your patience. In the progress of your academical life, you will become acquainted with facts, which I have omitted by design. Your time is valuable ; and I am unwilling to draw your attention from objects of greater importance.

FAREWELL.

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## Letter III.

GENERAL BEHAVIOUR, &c.

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THE age, at which you entered the university, authorizes me to address you as a youth of some experience and reflection. You are not too young to know that all societies have their peculiar regulations, upon the observance of which their very existence depends. As you will easily comprehend this principle, I hope you will not fail to make the application.

Too

Too many are hurried to the university, before they can estimate the value of a publick education ;—before they can discern the great end of literary institutions ;—or perceive the indispensable necessity of good order. The consequences are the utter neglect of their own studies, and the interruption of the studies of others. Too young for reflection, and too old for the restraints of fear, they require all the wisdom of government to keep them in tolerable subjection. But happy for you, they who superintended your education, were less anxious that you should be early fitted, than that you should

should be well fitted for the university. You were, therefore, indulged with a year extraordinary in preparatory studies. And I shall be much disappointed, if your diligence and steadiness do not verify the policy of this measure.

THE college-laws I mentioned in a former letter, and also the persons intrusted with their execution. I am willing to believe, that you will carefully observe the former; and treat the latter with becoming respect. The laws were made by wise and good men; and you may be assured, that they are executed by persons of learning and rectitude;—



tude ;—persons, who are as disposed as they are able, to promote your true interest ;—persons, who have a generous zeal for the honour of the university ; and who are entitled to good treatment on the principle of common gratitude. I mention these facts, because early prejudices against the instructors are easily introduced into young minds. But do you examine for yourself. Bring my representation to the test of your own experience. You will tell me, I am confident, that in every instructor you have met with a friend.

—It is not uncommon to hear loud complaints against the officers of college.

college. Ignorance of mankind, and of the art of governing, has long been a fashionable charge. But it would become persons, before they censure, to consider how difficult it is to act in the double capacity of a peace-officer, and an instructor. I cannot imagine a more perplexing situation. Nor could I be more embarrassed, than to be responsible for disorders, which if excused, would be imputed to remissness; if punished, to severity.

AFTER what has been said, I take it for granted, you will aim at the utmost regularity of behaviour.—With your good sense, it is impossible

ble that you should ever mistake rudeness for wit ; or that you should display your independence by riotous actions within the walls of the college, or by indecencies in the hall, and the chapel. In students younger than yourself, these excesses may be imputed to indiscretion. Candour will suggest, that childhood is vanity. And benevolence, whilst it frames an apology for inconsideration, will encourage a pleasing hope, that the improvements of the youth will obliterate the follies of the child. But you can have no claim to this extenuation. What would be indiscretions in others, will be crimes in you.

AMONG

AMONG the scenes of college-disorder, I am sorry to mention the chapel. But it would be as difficult to deny, as to excuse, the folly and impiety which have defecrated that place. It seems as if young persons imagined, that to do homage to God, they must degrade themselves; or that the reputation of the scholar would suffer from the seriousness of the Christian. But never was there a greater mistake. We honour ourselves, when we honour a Being, whose existence, perfections, and all-directing providence, are proved beyond contradiction. Fervent and rational devotion is the splendid ornament



nament of great minds. As you extend your acquaintance with literary characters, you will find, that some of the best scholars were as eminent for their piety, as their learning. The vast genius, and extensive knowledge of Sir ISAAC NEWTON would not suffer him to be an atheist. And the profound LOCKE was too well acquainted with the human mind, not to adore its Author.

FAREWELL.

**Letter IV.****COURSE OF STUDY DURING  
THE FOUR YEARS.**

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**B**EFORE I proceed to your future studies, it may be proper to review the classical knowledge which you have already acquired. You are acquainted with Cicero, Virgil, Cæsar, and Horace ; can render English into Latin with ease and correctness ; have been introduced to Xenophon and Homer ; and are master of the Greek Testament. The rules of grammar, you can repeat

peat with fluency ; and apply with judgment. And you are so familiar with the Roman orator, and the lyric poet, that you are not embarrassed with the lengthened periods of the one, or the elegant excentricities of the other.

NOR is your knowledge confined to the languages. You have a general acquaintance with Arithmetick. The principles of Geography have agreeably varied your studies ; and you understand the construction and use of the globe. To entertain some of your leisure hours, you have had recourse to the histories of Greece and Rome. And that of your own country

country has not been wholly neglected. Thus informed, you begin the college life with every advantage. You have anticipated the academical studies : and if you persevere, your future improvements must be answerable to your present acquisitions.

FOUR important years are now before you : let me give you some general account of the course of study to which they are devoted. The FIRST year, you will read Sallust, Livy, Horace, Terence, Homer's Iliad, Xenophon's Retreat of the Ten-thousand. You will study Rhetorick, extracted from the Preceptor, the Art of Speaking, Millot's Elements



ments of Universal History, Lowth's Grammar, Pike's Arithmetick, French and Hebrew, Watts's Logick, Morfe's Geography, and the Globes.

THE SECOND year, you will proceed with the Classicks, as before. You will pursue the study of French and Hebrew, of Logick, Geography, Arithmetick, and History. You will begin Locke on the Understanding, Blair's Lectures, Mensuration, and Algebra. Under the inspection of the Professor of Languages, you will correct bad English. And there will be occasionally required Translations of English into Latin.

THE studies of the THIRD year are

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the Clafficks already enumerated, Hebrew and French, History, Locke, Euclid's Elements, Enfield's Philosophy, Plain Geometry, Trigonometry, Conick Sections, Menfuration of Heights and Distances, Navigation, English Composition, Forenſick Diſputations.

THE LAST year, you will proceed to the Elements of Natural and Political Law, by Burlemaqui, to Diſſalling, Projections of the Sphere, Spherick Geometry, and Trigonometry, with their application to Aſtronomical Problems, Ferguſon's Aſtronomy, and Doddridge's Lectures. At the ſame time, you will proſecute  
English

English Composition, Forensic Disputations, History, and Philosophy. To these exercises, I would add Declaiming; which, during the two first years, is in private; afterwards, in the chapel.

SUCH is the established course of study at Cambridge. That the system is generally good, there can be no doubt: but I dare not affirm, that the objects of Academical education might not admit of a better arrangement. It has long been my opinion, that metaphysical studies are enjoined at too early a stage of the college-life. The mind must acquire considerable strength, before it  
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can examine its own powers ; and attend to its own operations. Hence, a studious youth may become a Mathematician, and a Natural Philosopher, long before he can become an expert Metaphysician. If this be a fair representation, the science of the human mind should crown the system of publick education.

As a different course, however, is established, it is not for you to object, but to comply. The TEMPLE of SCIENCE is erected on the summit of a mountain, the ascent to which is difficult on all sides, though it is possible, less so in one direction than another. The path chosen for you, though



though rough and winding, will certainly conduct to this fair structure. Every step gained will reward your exertion ; and facilitate your advances. If new obstacles arise, you will have new strength to surmount them. The great object will brighten as you approach it. And I would hope, that the rewards of the scholar will even surpass the expectations of the poet, when he said, "*Sublimi feriam sidera vertice.*"

FAREWELL.

**Letter V.****CLASSICAL STUDIES.**

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**Y**OU must have observed, and it is possible with some surprize, that I have made no inquiries relative to your future profession. I have not impertinently asked, whether it is your intention to be a lawyer, a physician, or a minister;—whether study is to be the employment of your life, or the pleasing entertainment of a leisure hour; whether your wishes would lead you to active or sedentary pursuits. Shall I say,

say, I have avoided these questions by design? If I could predict your future employment, it would produce no change in the tenour of my counsels. And may I add, if you have made up your own judgment, it ought to have no influence in the choice of your studies. General knowledge is the object contemplated by a publick education. And to deserve the reputation of a scholar, your acquisitions should be as various as the branches of science cultivated at the university; and as extensive as the transient term of four years will allow. The more you know, the more brilliant the figure

ure which you will make, whatever walk of life you may finally choofe. The various objects of human knowledge have an intimate connexion. And, whilst their union gives strength to genius, it multiplies the sources of literary pleasure.

A GENERAL arrangement of college-studies I exhibited in my last letter. According to that arrangement, a very important place is assigned to the GREEK and ROMAN CLASSICKS. You may perhaps, entertain the flattering thought, that you are already a proficient in this branch of literature. Familiar with Cicero and Virgil, with Horace and Cefar,



Cesar, you may be willing to discontinue the acquaintance. You may turn from the Sacred Classics, as no longer deserving your attention. And you may be hardly persuaded to bestow that time on Homer and Xenophon, to which the one has an indisputable claim as an immortal poet; and the other, as a polished historian. The facility, with which you will accompany your class, may betray you into this error. And you will be confirmed in it, if you listen to all the fashionable objections, which are now made to the study of ancient languages.

I KNOW not whether I have been  
most

most surpris'd or disgusted, at modern observations on Greek and Roman learning. Even the friends of classical literature have not always done justice to the subject. In recommendation of Greek and Latin, they have remarked how much those languages have contributed to enrich our own. And hence they have inferred the indispensable necessity of an acquaintance with them, if it were only as a qualification to trace a modern word to its ancient source.

BUT you will remember, that a mere etymologist is the very lowest character in the republic of letters. Such a person may understand the  
derivation

derivation of a word, without knowing its precise meaning. And though he assume the name, he must want the essentials of the scholar. It is therefore, injustice to classical studies, to represent the pedantick qualifications of an etymologist as the principal end for which those studies are pursued.

You will ask then, why so much time is devoted to them ; and why a persevering application to the Classics is so warmly recommended ? I answer, for the very important purpose of improving your understanding, and cultivating your taste. The Roman and Grecian  
writers

writers of established reputation will assist you in thinking, writing, and speaking well. In their works you will find the most liberal and elegant sentiments. Many of their productions may be considered as finished models of good sense, and good language. To borrow an expression from one, who was qualified to discern their beauties, and to estimate their value, you must look to those writers for "all that belongs to original genius, to a spirited, masterly, and high execution." These reasons are sufficient to justify the earnestness, with which I recommend Classical Studies. It is my wish to see



see you instructed and delighted ;—  
to see your genius acquire strength,  
and your taste a high polish.

SUBSERVIENT to these ends, are  
the justly admired productions enu-  
merated in a former letter. I there  
mentioned Sallust, Livy, Horace,  
Terence, Homer's Iliad, and Xeno-  
phon's Retreat of the Ten-thousand.  
To these let me add the works of  
Tacitus, Pliny's Epistles, Cicero's  
Letters and Tusculan Questions, and  
indeed, all his elegant works, the  
Odysssey of Homer, Xenophon's  
Memorabilia, and Select Orations of  
Demosthenes and Isocrates. These  
productions of Roman and Grecian

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genius

genius have an established reputation. Their peculiar excellencies have been pointed out by criticks of taste and judgment. And it is inconceivable how much assistance you may derive from them, if ambitious of the style and sentiments, which distinguish the polite scholar.

THOUGH familiar with Virgil, you will permit me to recall your attention to his truly correct poems. As a writer, judgment raised him above his contemporaries : as a man, he was universally esteemed for his modesty. "Let Virgil be read almost to satiety," is the advice of a modern writer. Acquainted with  
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the beauties of his composition, you may then devote a moment to those who have made him their model; and who have best succeeded in their attempts to imitate the smoothness of his numbers. Of these, Sannazarius, a Neapolitan of the fifteenth century, brings the highest recommendations. The purity of his style, and the harmony of his verse, have procured him many warm admirers. And by the best judges of classical merit, Vida, an Italian, who flourished in the succeeding century, is thought to deserve all the encomiums, which modern admiration has bestowed on his taste and genius.

I CANNOT

I CANNOT close this letter without repeating the friendly advice, that you will suffer nothing to divert you from the enthusiastick prosecution of these studies. Your attainments will refute all objections to classical learning. However employed in life, never will you regret a compliance with this counsel. Your experience will attest the refined pleasures which flow from this fountain ; and your classical accomplishments will be my vindication.

FAREWELL.



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**Letter VI.****GRAMMAR, RHETORICK, &c.**

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**T**HE earnestness, with which I have recommended the immortal productions of Grecian and Roman genius, will not, I hope, cool your ardour for other studies ; or confine your ambition to classical eminence. General knowledge, I have already observed, is the great object of an academical education. This you will carefully bear in mind : and, under the influence of this important truth, I shall proceed to offer my senti-

ments on the various studies which will divide your time.

To write your own language with grammatical correctness ; to read and speak it with propriety ; to discern its beauties ; and to be able to distinguish those beauties by their proper names, are objects highly deserving the attention of a scholar. For this reason, Lowth's Grammar, the Art of Speaking, and a small treatise on Rhetorick; are put into the hands of a student, soon after his admission to the university ; and furnish some of the exercises of the freshman-year. The last of these works is plain and comprehensive.

The

The Art of Speaking is considered, on the whole, a valuable compilation. And as to the Grammar, it is a monument of the judgment, accuracy, and critical ingenuity of the learned author.

It is mortifying to observe, how few, after all the expenses of a public education, are masters of their own language. Errours in point of grammar are not uncommon. Still more numerous are the faults arising from the impertinence and confusion of Rhetorical figures. The incumbrance of superfluous words is a general evil. And many compositions, in which the rules of grammar

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mar are strictly observed ; and which are not deficient in ornament, are disgusting for want of that smoothness which is produced by a judicious arrangement of words, particularly of those which terminate a sentence. The power of numbers is felt by every person who has a good ear. And the sentiment must be weighty indeed, to compensate an inattention to harmony in the structure of a period.

You will not therefore, think it beneath you to avail yourself of every thing which is esteemed an excellence in good writing. Endeavour first, to be grammatically correct.

With



With this view, consult Lowth, who prescribes excellent rules ; and whose work contains many critical and judicious remarks. The elements of Rhetorick will unfold the nature and use of figures ; and from Blair and Mason, you will learn the power of numbers in English composition. The ancients paid great attention to this subject. They knew what astonishing effects might be produced by proper words in proper places. Isocrates among the Greeks, and Cicero among the Romans, were masters of this art. Conversing with these writers, you may be led to imitate their manner.

THE

THE professor of languages will cheerfully afford his assistance. He will point out redundances and defects. He will show when figures are improperly introduced; and when they are pertinent and ornamental. He will convince you how much a style may be improved, merely by a transposition of words. The principles of harmony, he will explain to your satisfaction. He will refer you to compositions at once clear, rich, and flowing. And with the most weighty arguments he will support the assertion, that you must write AGREEABLY, if you would write WELL.

REVIEWING

REVIEWING this letter, you may possibly think, that the directions and counsels, which are the subject of it, are premature. I am aware, that themes are not among the exercises of the first year. But, though not exacted by the college-laws, still I hope you will devote some time to English composition. Letters you will certainly write: and they may be made both a pleasing, and an useful exercise. In epistolary compositions, let neatness and correctness be your aim; and Cicero your guide. He is justly preferred to the elegant Pliny; because he corresponded with his friends; and Pliny, with the world.

world. There is an excellent translation of Cicero's epistles by Melmoth. You will occasionally consult the translation for the benefit of the notes: but you will peruse the original.

FAREWELL.



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**Letter VII.****HISTORY, MILLOT, &c.**

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**M**ILLOT's Elements of General History are a pleasing introduction to that useful and entertaining study. The high reputation of the author procured the work many admirers in Europe. And in our own country, it has received the warm approbation of some, whose taste and judgment are not to be questioned. "Elegant perspicuity, and spirit in the narrative,—solidity, justice, and impartiality in the reflections,"

tions," are the terms in which this work has been characterized.

BUT do not suffer this imposing description to mislead your understanding. Remember, Millot has furnished only the Elements of History. To obtain a clear and comprehensive view of ancient and modern events, you must have recourse to other writers. A work, so concise and general as this, can make only a slight impression. The information conveyed by it must be very partial ; and consequently, very inadequate to the exigencies of a liberal scholar. Still, as an introduction to history, it has great merit. When  
master

master of these elements, a youth is qualified to study larger works with success. He is able to connect events with a precision, which otherwise would not have been in his power. And whilst he observes things with the eye of a philosopher, like a philosopher, he will endeavour to refer them to their proper causes. Must not such a study be highly gratifying to an inquisitive mind? Must not historical knowledge be an inexhaustible source of mental entertainment? Is it not one of the truly elegant accomplishments of the scholar?

UNDER the head of classical literature,

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ture, I mentioned Sallust, Xenophon, Tacitus, and Livy. I need not therefore, enlarge in their commendation. I am confident, you will read them with attention : but that they may inform your understanding as well as gratify your taste, previously consult Adams's and Potter's Antiquities. The former will clear up many obscure passages in the Roman history : and the latter will throw light on the Grecian page.

THE name of Rollin is well known and respected at the university. You will read his ancient history with the care due to a work so well-intended ; and which displays such  
various

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various learning. Gillies's Greece, the Travels of Anacharfis, Ruffell's Ancient and Modern Europe, Hook's Roman History, Ferguson's Progress and Termination of the Roman Republick, are productions of acknowledged merit. To these, I should add Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, if his language better accorded with his work; and his temper were that of a fair and impartial historian. But if we admit the rules prescribed by Cicero for this species of composition, Gibbon must appear to great disadvantage, both as a writer, and as a man.

HUME and Henry have given a

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very

very interesting account of England. Robertson has immortalized Scotland by his labours. And his rival, Stuart, has done great honour both to himself, and his country. Leland's history of Ireland is much commended. And Raynal's account of the East and West-Indies was read and admired, when it first made its appearance.

You have already a slight acquaintance with the history of your own country. As you would esteem it a disgrace to be deficient in domestick information, I would recommend to your perusal the following works :  
Dr. Williams's History of Vermont,  
Dr.



Dr. Belknap's History of New-Hampshire, and his Biography, Judge Sullivan's History of the District of Maine, Governour Hutchinson's History of Massachusetts, Collections of the Historical Society, Smith's History of New-York, Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, Ramsay's Account of the War in South-Carolina, and his History of the American Revolution, Gordon's History of the War, Imlay's and Finche's Description of Kentucky, Franklin's Review of the History of Pennsylvania, Colden's History of the Five Nations, Charlevoix's Journal of Travels through North-America. To these let me add Belsham's

sham's History of George III. and the Transactions of American literary Societies. The former will throw some light on the political, the latter, on the natural history of the country.

DR. MORSE'S Geography contains many important facts, with which every scholar should be well acquainted. A new and improved edition of this work will soon make its appearance. Geographical knowledge is not only a pleasing acquisition, but it is a pre-requisite to the study of history, voyages, and travels. The artificial globe will afford you great assistance in this pursuit; and if you procure some approved maps, together

ther with Dr. Priestley's Historical and Biographical Charts, you will not, at any future time, regret the expense.

HAVING mentioned Dr. Priestley, I am naturally reminded of his Lectures on History. By all means, give those Lectures a place in your private library ; and consult them as a most learned and judicious performance. The Student's Dictionary, by Mortimer, you may easily procure. In the second part, you will find a compendium of Biography. When reading Plutarch's Lives of ancient persons, and Johnson's Lives of the Poets, and indeed, when studying history of any kind, it will be a great convenience

convenience to have Mortimer's Dictionary at command.

BIOGRAPHERS have greatly contributed to the entertainment and instruction of mankind. A historical account of those persons, who have been distinguished in America, will be particularly interesting to you. A work of this kind, successfully begun by Dr. Belknap, will, when completed, be a rich acquisition to the country.

I CANNOT conclude this letter, without observing that narratives of particular events ought not to be overlooked in a course of historical reading. Judge Minot's account of  
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the Infurrection in Maffachufetts is concife, faithful, and judicious. From his ftyle and manner, you may form fome idea of a continuation of Hutchinfon's Hiftory, a work with which the publick will foon be favoured.

You may poffibly object to the number of books recommended in this letter ; and you may plead that college-exercifes will not admit of fuch extenfive reading. I feel the weight of the objection : but you will recollect, that there are vacations ; and that they may, in part, be devoted to this object. Why would you lofe three out of twelve months ? for during fo many, you are abfent from  
the

the university. The study of history cannot be considered as a severe application of the mind. You may therefore, attend to your own health, and attend to your friends, whilst the intervals of college-duty are filled up in the manner which I have now recommended.

FAREWELL.

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**Letter VIII.****HEBREW, FRENCH.**

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**I**T is optional, I believe, with the scholar, to study either the Hebrew, or the French language. Be not displeased, if I undertake to be the advocate of both. It is true, Hebrew and French are very unlike both in sound and structure. Equally unlike are also the purposes for which they are studied. The knowledge of the one is a learned,—that of the other, a polite accomplishment. The former is a qualification

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for sacred criticism : the latter, for an elegant intercourse with the world.

WHAT wonders may be performed by wit ! Two humorous lines \* of the celebrated Butler have almost ruined the reputation of Hebrew. The decision of the poet, who knew nothing of the language, has been opposed to the sober judgment of those who were masters of it. Hence the contempt, with which Hebrew literature has been treated at the university. A professorship has been founded to very little purpose ; and the

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\* Hebrew roots are ever found  
To flourish best in barren ground.



the well-intended generosity of a Hancock has, in this instance, been almost defeated.

SUPERIOUR to common prejudices, you will not fail to honour yourself; and to gratify the Hebrew professor, by attending his lectures. With his assistance, you will easily acquire some general knowledge of this ancient and venerable language. To say the least, without neglecting other studies, you may lay a foundation for future attainments in Hebrew literature. Who knows whether curiosity, or considerations of a professional nature, may not incline you to repair to the fountain of religious information?

information? If, in any future time, this should be your ambition, it will be a pleasing reflection that you followed my advice.

AN acquaintance with the French language is essential to a modern education. The revolution has introduced us to the politest people on earth. Even before that event, there was a prevailing inclination to study their language. And long before a French instructor was employed by the university, some of the scholars added this to their other accomplishments. That you will follow their example, I have every reason to believe. To read the  
French

French language with ease ; to speak it with propriety ; and to write it correctly, are enviable attainments. The first will not cost you so much labour as you may now imagine. But a close and persevering attention to the grammar, and continual practice, must qualify you for writing and conversing in French.

I AM disposed to think, that the labour required will not discourage your application to a language which has indeed, many charms ; and which is now spoken as well by the most informed, as the politest people. I imagine, I now see your exercises before you. And I hope, soon to hear that

that you have made considerable progress in Telemachus, delighted equally with the style as with the sentiment. Let the chaste compositions of the late Florian, particularly his Numa Pompilius, succeed those of the excellent Fenelon. The Travels of Anacharfis, whilst they display the extensive reading of the author, may be considered as a specimen of the exquisite harmony of which the French period is susceptible. In the works of Buffon, you will find the beauties of language with the wonders of nature. The Studies of St. Pierre will afford you much entertainment. If his philosophy is some-  
times



times lame, his language is good ; and his remarks, many of them, new and pertinent. France has produced numberless writers, who do honour to human genius. To mention the most eminent, I must extend this letter to an unreasonable length. I therefore, refer you to the French instructor, who will be pleased with your assiduity ;—and who will put into your hands such works as will aid his own labours ; and make you a proficient in his language.

FAREWELL.

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**Letter IX.**

**LOGICK, LOCKE, REID, META-  
PHYSICK.**

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**L**OGICK, I am sorry to observe, has with many persons, a doubtful reputation. The time was, when it triumphed over other arts: and the time has come, when the usurpation is too much resented. From being objects of veneration to become objects of contempt, is the fate of many things in this world. In the walks of science, many paths have been thronged and deserted.

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Many scholars may be compared to that Roman emperor, who adored the images of the gods, one day; and defiled them, the next.

WHAT may not be abused? That the art of reasoning has been degraded to the art of wrangling, is a most unpleasant truth. Availing themselves of its technical terms, and syllogistick forms, it is acknowledged that some have stopped the mouth of an adversary, without convincing his understanding. To contend rather for victory than for truth, may be the fault of mere logicians. Still the art itself is not to be involved in their disgrace.

REASON is a most glorious endowment : and to know how to employ it well in the investigation of truth is an infinite advantage. This is the professed object of all logical treatises ; and it is the real one of that which is studied at the university. The amiable and inquisitive Dr. Watts, ever intent on discovering the truth, thought he might serve mankind by publishing this work. A mind so ingenuous as his, would have revolted at the idea of barren disputation. Of all men, he would have been the last to dignify such disputation by reducing it to rule.

LOGICK is divided into four parts,  
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in conformity to the four principal operations of the mind. These are perception, judgment, argumentation, and disposition. Whether this enumeration be complete, or deficient, you will be able to determine, when you have read some Essays on the Intellectual and Active Powers of the Mind, composed by Dr. Reid; and which may be considered as the valuable fruits of a long course of metaphysical inquiry. For the present, you must content yourself with this division.

THAT part of logick which treats of perception, will introduce you to the doctrine of ideas, and the  
terms

terms by which they are expressed. Under the head of judgment, you will learn how ideas are compared, and propositions formed. Argumentation will explain the mystery of inferring unknown truths from certain premises. And disposition will help you to arrange your arguments in the best manner. Such are the leading principles of the art of reasoning. Such is logick, as explained by Dr. Watts in his valuable treatise on the subject; and occasionally illustrated in his Improvement of the Mind.

THIS work, which I would have you read, contains rules for conduct-

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ing fyllogiftick and forensick disputations. Syllogifms, in all their varieties, are explained in the third part of Logick. They were invented by the great Aristotle; but, with their author, they seem to be now passing into oblivion. I recollect the time, when fyllogiftick disputations were the principal literary entertainment of a commencement-day. They are now superseded by exercises, in which the candidate for academical honours can discover his own taste; and accommodate himself to that of a polite auditory.

FORENSICK disputations will always, I presume, support their credit.

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They are a most pleasing and useful exercise. As a mere display of logical acuteness, they may perhaps, yield to syllogistical argumentation. But in every other view, they claim a superiority. The forensic disputant, unconfined by moods and figures, is at liberty to express his thoughts clearly, concisely, and, I may add, elegantly. When advanced to this exercise, your own experience will accord with these observations.

HAVING finished the study of Logic, you will read Locke on the Human Understanding. Locke was an eminent philosopher. And this work, if it had been the only fruit  
of



of his metaphysical researches, would be sufficient to immortalize his name. Its design is to ascertain "the original, certainty, and extent of human knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion, and assent." In this inquiry into the constitution of the mind, the author has discovered the astonishing vigour of his own. No wonder some, who envied his reputation, opposed his Essay. Nor ought it to surprise us, if in a speculation so profound, some things should be liable to objection.

AMONG those who, whilst they revered his understanding, have dissented

sent from some of the principles of Mr. Locke, Dr. Reid is the most respectable. The science of the human mind was his favourite study. His first publication on the subject was read with pleasure : his last will more than please, it will inform ; and in regard to some points, will convince. The one was well-intended ; the other is ingeniously executed. The work, on which I bestow these commendations, is entitled *Essays on the Intellectual and Active Powers of Man*. The attentive perusal of these Essays may be deferred to the senior-year. I say nothing of the superficial production of Dr. Beattie.

Beattie. His Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth has been highly extolled : but I have not been able to discover its merits.

DR. Hartley had studied Locke and Newton : and his Observations on Man point him out as the wonder of his age. This performance discovers a strength of genius, a compass of thought, an accumulation of learning, and a patience of inquiry, which entitle him to rank with his great masters. That part of the work, which contains the theory of the human mind, Dr. Priestley has published by itself. To render it entertaining, he has omit-

ted some things which are merely hypothetical; and to make the system intelligible, he has prefixed three essays of his own. A German philosopher, Pistorius, has enriched the other part, by some most valuable notes and observations.

My subject led me to mention Hartley: but I do not recommend his work to your perusal, whilst at the university. You have not time for such an undertaking. It requires some months of patient study, and a most vigorous exertion of the mental powers, to comprehend his system. A future opportunity may however, invite; and intermediate improvements



improvements will certainly qualify you to examine his principles.

IN the mean time, to obtain some idea of Hartley's system, and of the opinions of other writers, relative to the intellectual and moral constitution of man, you may turn to the eleventh volume of the American Encyclopedia. Under the head of Metaphysics you will find many curious observations. Do not take the alarm at this term. I know the contempt in which Metaphysick is held by polite scholars. But I know likewise, that the true source of this contempt is an unacquaintance with the real nature and tendency of  
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Metaphysical speculations. They certainly invigorate the mind ; and, according to some of the best judges, they confer a rank in the republick of letters, to which the mere proficient in polite literature cannot aspire.

FAREWELL.

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**Letter X.****ALGEBRA, MATHEMATICKS.**

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**A**LREADY acquainted with the principles of Arithmetick, and expert in the application of its rules, I hope you look forward, with ardour, to Algebra, Geometry, and the higher branches of Mathematicks. I should be mortified, if I could think, that popular prejudices against these studies would divert you from their pursuit. As some have exerted their wit on Metaphysical speculations, others have treated Mathematicks

maticks with the same indignity. They have represented the study as insufferably dry ; the science itself, as useless. To investigate the properties of circles, the relations of angles, the numbers expressed by Algebraick symbols, has appeared in their eyes far below the dignity of real genius.

To a youth of sentiment and feeling, such representations are very discouraging. The Elements of Euclid are put into his hands : he wishes to understand them. He sees the Algebraist perform wonders by substituting letters or symbols for numbers and quantities : he is desirous  
to



to comprehend the mystery. He has heard of the excellency of Mathematical reasoning, and the conviction which it carries with it : he wishes to experience its effects.— Though he may never have occasion to survey a piece of land ; to navigate a vessel ; or to take the altitude of a mountain, yet he chooses to know how these operations are performed. But whilst curiosity propels him towards these objects, his progress is retarded by the prevailing example of his fellow-students, and the fashionable opinions of the age.

How many, who want inclination or industry to engage in Mathematical

ical studies, take shelter under the reputation of Dr. Swift! Though he was unacquainted with this branch of literature, yet it is acknowledged, that he was a great man. But he would have been greater, if he had passed an honourable examination in Mathematicks at the university of Dublin. And he would have been greater still, if the painful recollection of his ignorance, as to this one article, had not soured his temper; and disposed him, through life, to insult and ridicule those who made it their study.

BUT let neither the authority of his name, nor the poignancy of his wit,

wit, prejudice your mind against Mathematical knowledge. Among those, who have excelled in it, are persons, whose superiority of understanding will command the admiration of all ages. The philosophical greatness of Sir ISAAC NEWTON was raised on this foundation. In the study of nature he was remarkably successful ; because he had been remarkably assiduous in the study of Mathematicks. And I have the pleasure of an acquaintance with several persons, whose minds have been strengthened ; and who have acquired the habit of thinking closely, by their application to this branch of science.

PURSUING the same object, may you reap the same advantage. Algebra, I will venture to predict, will be a pleasing exercise, when its peculiar signs and symbols have become familiar to the eye ; and its leading principles are understood. In mensuration you will proceed without much difficulty. Many propositions in Euclid will require close attention ; if you mean, as well to comprehend as to repeat, the demonstration. But your labour will be greatly increased, when you leave Plain for Spherical Geometry and Trigonometry, and proceed to their application to Astronomical problems. Still, every difficulty will give way to diligence.

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The plainer will prepare you for the higher branches of Mathematicks ; and what the tutor began, the professor will complete.

INNUMERABLE are the writers on this subject ; and various their merits, if considered in reference to young persons. Not those which are the most profound, but those productions which are most intelligible, must supply the absence of living instructors. The Mathematical tutor and professor will, if you consult them, direct your choice. As to the objects of their own department, they must be able to give you the best counsel ; and with the ability to serve you, be assured, they have the disposition.

FAREWELL.

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**Letter XI.**

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY,  
ENFIELD, FERGUSON.

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**N**ATURAL Philosophy is one of the most pleasing studies which can employ a young mind. Nor is there a place in the United States, in which it may be pursued to greater advantage than at Cambridge. The munificence of its friends has bestowed on the university an excellent philosophical apparatus. Thus provided, the professor can fix the attention, whilst he  
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is labouring to inform the understanding of his pupils. The principles of his science, he can verify by actual experiment. And that which would otherwise be dry and obscure, he can render perfectly intelligible, and highly entertaining.

PREVIOUSLY however, to your attendance on his lectures, you must study Enfield's Institutes of Natural Philosophy. This is an elementary work : and as such, it is calculated for the information of those who have never turned their attention towards this subject. The author has availed himself of the philosophical knowledge of Newton, Keil,

Whiston, and others. His apology is, that he was "more desirous to be useful, than to appear original."

MATTER, its infinite divisibility; attraction of cohesion, repulsion, and attraction of gravitation are the subjects of the first book. In the second, the general laws of motion are explained. The third unfolds the doctrine of fluids, and that of the weight, pressure, and elasticity of air. The various phenomena of light and vision employ the fourth book of these Institutes. The fifth is devoted to Astronomy: the two last to Magnetism and Electricity. If I may judge of your mind by my own,  
you



you will be highly entertained with Opticks; but you will be transported with the wonders of Astronomy. How will it delight your imagination to travel from orb to orb, and from system to system! How will your astonishment rise, when you view every fixed star as a sun; and conclude, that worlds like our own are enlightened and warmed by its rays! How will your mind expand, when it reflects on the myriads of beings inhabiting those worlds! And when you make a transition from the system to the Author of nature, how will you admire and reverence him, who made, preserves, and governs all things!

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THE sublime entertainment, experienced by Astronomers, has excited some, who were qualified for such an undertaking, to bring down the science to common capacities. Among those, who have succeeded in the attempt, I mention Bonnycastle with particular pleasure. His work will introduce you to Ferguson ; and under De la Lande you may complete your Astronomical studies.

BUT though I have been somewhat lavish in my commendations of this branch of Natural Philosophy, I would not have you conclude, that Mechanicks, Hydrostaticks, and Opticks

ticks will not reward your application. The last I have already mentioned as a most engaging study: and the others are both pleasing and useful. Electricity and Magnetism have long employed the inquisitive. To account for their peculiar phenomena, various theories have been invented: and to investigate their laws, numberless experiments have been made. But whilst the latter have gratified the curious, the former have not illuminated the philosophical mind.

ADAMS'S Lectures, though not perfectly correct, have been favourably received. Whilst you are studying

ing Enfield, peruse those Lectures; and, if you have time, consult Nicholson's Philosophy. The principles of Chemistry, by the last of these writers, I would advise you to read; but not till you have gained all the information, which Bishop Watson has communicated in his very useful, and truly elegant Essays. In attending the Chemical professor, your time will be well employed. His lectures, and your own reading, will afford you present entertainment; and will give you a relish for nobler discoveries which may be made in this region of science. Chemical philosophy is yet imperfectly understood.



stood. But men of the first genius are employed in the study of it ; and who knows what may be the fruit of their labours ?

AVERSE to the healing art, as a professional pursuit, some young persons have declined attending the lectures on Anatomy and Surgery, and on the Theory and Practice of Physick. They have hastily concluded, that they should not derive any essential advantage from lectures on these subjects. But, why would you not gain all the information which college-institutions can give ? The human frame is an exquisite production : who would not choose to explore

plore its wonders ? And human disorders, though, in one view, evils which the physician is to remedy, are, in another, phenomena for which the philosopher must assign the cause. Consider then, the Anatomical and Medical lectures as philosophical productions. And is it not your wish to form an acquaintance with every object comprehended in the general system, and subject to the laws of nature ?

FAREWELL.

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**Letter XII.**

BURLAMAQUI, POLITICAL  
PROFESSOR, PRICE, PALEY,  
ENFIELD.

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**T**HE Principles of Natural and Political Law, by Burlamaqui, have, during many years, been studied at the university. The author is highly celebrated as a Christian philosopher. His style is much admired for its clearness and purity ; and the work itself, for uniting, “ after the example of Plato and Tully, ethicks and jurisprudence, poli-

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ticks

ticks and religion." This is the testimony of the translator ; and I have heard the same remark from others, who were thoroughly acquainted with the merits of the performance.

In my account of the university, I took notice that some appropriations had been made for a professorship of Ethicks and Politicks. How much is it to be regretted, that so pleasing a prospect cannot yet be realized ? Lectures on these subjects would throw light on the principles of Burlamaqui ; would help you to form a judgment respecting certain questions and difficulties in morals ; would perhaps, clear up many points, which  
have



have long divided Ethical writers ; and would lay a foundation for that political knowledge, which is of infinite importance to a free country. The last is an object of such magnitude, that I wonder, it has not arrested the publick attention.

THE constitutions of the several American Republicks, and that of the United States, would supply materials for many useful lectures. How much ingenuity might be displayed, and how much information communicated by a professor who had studied human nature ; who had investigated the subject of Morals ; who had surveyed ancient republicks,

publicks, both in glory and in ruin ; who had read history with the eye of a political philosopher ; who had acquainted himself with the true state of his own country ; and who had been in the habit of reasoning from principles to effects ? A professional chair thus filled, would be an honour to the university. The lessons, delivered from it, would compose a system of rational politicks ; and the youth, who had drawn his opinions from such a system, would be qualified to render his part of publick services ; and to take his share of publick blessings.

IMPRESSED with these truths, I  
shall

shall feel impatient, till I see a moral and political professor among the college-instructors. The fund at present, is very inadequate to such an establishment. But benefactors may appear; their munificence may be directed towards this object; and a person, qualified to form the American youth to the political system of their country, may be induced to take up his residence at the university. In the mean time, a non-resident, and temporary professor might be employed to deliver a course of lectures. The elements of Politicks and Morality should be explained in every college in the United States.

It is highly expedient, that principles which are to regulate the actions of the man, and the American citizen, should be early implanted.

BUT whilst the university is unsupplied with such an instructor as I have just described, you must pay a particular attention to writers who have done themselves honour in the discussion of moral and political subjects. Of this number is Burlamaqui, whose Principles of Natural and Political Law the tutor will explain. I have already mentioned this work, and the approbation bestowed upon it by competent judges. On the subject of Morals, the late Dr. Price  
has



has displayed uncommon strength of mind, and clearness of conception.

Archdeacon Paley is a most pleasing writer. His Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy have run through many editions; which must be considered as a publick testimony in their favour. This ingenious writer has the happy talent of placing truths in a very engaging light; and of establishing rules "adapted to real life, and actual situations."

Treatises on this branch of philosophy have sometimes wanted this excellence. For illustrations, the author has wandered very far from common life. The style also has been

sometimes

sometimes too sententious ; and at other times, too diffuse. And the charge of great prolixity has been brought against many systems of Ethicks, which would otherwise have been very useful to young persons ; and which are in reality, a monument of the patient application, and the genius of those who produced them. In all these respects, Archdeacon Paley is unexceptionable. His work is concise ; his style is clear ; his order is good ; and his examples are familiar. We can always discover his meaning, though we may not assent to his principles ; and we are entertained with his arguments,  
even

even when they do not produce conviction.

THERE are innumerable writers on moral and political subjects. Some of the greatest characters, both in ancient and modern times, have thought themselves nobly employed in explaining the science of manners or duty. Enfield, in his History of Philosophy, has preserved the names of the more eminent; and has obliged the learned world with an account of their systems. When you peruse this history, you will perceive the progress of moral science. To your eye, the reputation of some, who were dignified with the name of sages,

sages, will seem to rest on a very narrow foundation. You will not be surpris'd, that persons of reflection among the Heathen, should despair of human morals, unless something more powerful than human philosophy were to attempt their reformation. You will be sensible, how much the world is indebted to revelation for the divine ART of becoming VIRTUOUS and HAPPY.

FAREWELL.



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**Letter XIII.****THEOLOGY.**

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**D**ODDRIDGE's Lectures were delivered with great applause at the academy over which he presided. Before their introduction to our university, the students were examined in a compendious theological work, composed by a professor in the university of Basil. It is difficult to conceive of any thing more disgusting than this compend. It is written in barbarous Latin, and in the dry, systematical way which is so displeasing

displeasing to a modern taste. If it had been the intention of those, who direct the course of study at Cambridge, to implant an early prejudice against this branch of knowledge, they could not have employed a better instrument than Wollebius to accomplish their purpose.

THE introduction of Doddridge's Lectures must therefore, be considered as a great improvement in the system of education. Whether it is the highest improvement of which the system is capable, I will not presume to determine. Thus much may be said, these Lectures, according to all accounts, were received by  
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the author's learned contemporaries, as a most valuable production. Much labour was employed on them ; and he was continually enriching them with new remarks of his own, and new references to the writings of others. And since the death of the author, the Lectures have received still further improvement from the learning and industry of his biographer.

It would be humbling to the last degree, if I could suppose, that the subjects, treated in this work, would not engage your attention. Can the mind be more nobly employed than in contemplating the character

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of its author, the proofs of his existence, the harmony of his perfections, and the rules of his government? Can any thing be more interesting to you, than the course of action which will be most conducive to your moral improvement, and final happiness? What study can be compared with that which unfolds futurity? What inquiry of a philosophical nature can dispute pre-eminence with that which respects the end of your being?

You must be too deeply impressed both with the importance, and the dignity of the subject, not to avail yourself of all the means of theological



gical information. The sacred writings, particularly those of the Evangelists, and Apostles, demand your first attention. Your acquaintance with the Greek language will induce you to read the latter in the original. The style of the New Testament, it is acknowledged, is very unlike that of the classical authors. The sacred writers never aimed at emulating those of Greece and Rome. They were willing to leave to others the praise of elegance, whilst they retained the recommendation of truth.

STILL however, their writings are not absolutely destitute of classical beauties.

beauties. St. Luke is truly elegant in many places; and the language of St. John is smooth and flowing. This is the testimony of some of the greatest criticks. They further assert, that the Epistles of St. Paul, though abounding with Hebraisms, still retain "a considerable share of the roundness of Grecian composition." You may therefore, find some entertainment as a classical scholar, whilst you derive the science of religion from the inspired pages.

THE private and publick lectures of the Theological Professor will explain the nature, evidence, and design of the Christian revelation. A  
mind

mind so inquisitive as yours, must aspire to some general knowledge of these subjects. In every view, the Christian Religion merits your attention. The evidence on which it rests ; the good which would be produced by it, if its whole influence were felt ; and the good actually communicated by it to human society, conspire to do honour to the system ; and to recommend it to your impartial examination. As to its evidence, it is precisely such as the subject requires. It perfectly accords with the peculiar nature of religion, and the constitution of the human mind. Nor has it been in-

validated by any objections, which ancient or modern ingenuity has proposed. Archdeacon Paley, in his late incomparable work, and Doctor Priestley, in his Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever, and in his Discourses on Revealed Religion, particularly those delivered in Philadelphia, have adduced arguments in favour of revelation, which are not to be "gain said or resisted."

As to the tendency of the Christian system, that will appear from the slightest inspection. From the acquaintance which you now have with the doctrines and precepts of the great instructor of mankind, you must perceive



perceive how much the sum of human virtue, and human happiness would be increased, by an assent to the one, and a practical submission to the other. The numerous evils which now flow from injustice, falsehood, envy, ambition, anger, selfishness, the animal propensities, and malevolence, would be exterminated by the Christian religion. Under its benign influence, good order would universally prevail; friendship would exist in perfection; and the enjoyments of men would suffer no interruption from their perverseness.

By attending to its present effects, you may form some idea of the blessings

sings which Christianity would communicate, if it were the religion of the whole world. Since the introduction of this divine system, there has been less evil in society, than in former ages. As soon as it enlightened the understanding, and warmed the heart of any people, they desisted from human sacrifices. This ferocious superstition was an evil, which philosophy could not cure. Human blood stained the altars of Greece and Rome. No wonder then, that in Britain, Gaul, and Africa, sacrifices of this abominable nature were in high estimation. If the gods of Carthage demanded the richest blood  
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in the republick, we may believe that those of Mexico, according to the best accounts, were annually propitiated by twenty thousand victims from the human species. But wherever the influence of Christianity has been felt, these sacrifices have been held in detestation. Millions therefore, rescued from the priest, and the altar, owe their preservation to this most rational, and benevolent religion.

It has also afforded protection to feeble infants, and superannuated slaves. They are no longer exposed to perish with hunger, or to be devoured by wild beasts. Without  
either

either shame or remorse, the Heathens could subject these miserable objects to so hard a fate. But the Christian religion teaches men to prefer compassion to convenience. It places humanity at the head of all the moral virtues. For which reason, it may claim the honour of having saved from intense suffering, and a cruel death, the most unfortunate of the human kind.

THE contests of gladiators, a spectacle which had a most pernicious effect on the publick morals, lost their admirers, wherever the benevolent spirit of Christianity prevailed. The rigours of slavery were also softened



softened by it ; and, in many instances, it set bounds to the ravages of war. If the Goths and Vandals had been absolutely unrestrained by this religion, when they over-ran the Roman empire, they would have been infinitely prodigal of Roman blood.

To the influence of Christianity, must also be ascribed those humane institutions which are such a blessing to society. Among the Heathens, there were no establishments for the benefit of the poor. Their religion did not teach them to feel for persons in distress. It did not protest against the inhuman practice of chain-  
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ing an unfortunate debtor at the door of his creditor, scourging him in an ignominious manner, and selling his wife and children. The miserable do not experience such treatment among Christians : but it is because their religion has exposed its infamy and wickedness.

I WILL mention one more fact ; the system of moral instruction, which I am now recommending, has produced a purity of mind which was unknown before its publication. The most unnatural vices, and those which are too indecent to be named, caused not any blush on the cheek of a Heathen. The temple in which  
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he worshipped, was a brothel ; and the gratification of the worst passions, an act of religion. Lust, having this sanction, contaminated all orders in society. Persons of the highest rank, and of the best families, so far from feeling themselves disgraced, gloried in their shame.

SINCE the Christian religion has been introduced, there have been more decency and purity in the world. The virtue of young persons has not been endangered by so many vitious examples. Libertinism has been laid under some restraint. And whilst some have been pure from principle, others have been pre-

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served

served from criminal excesses by a regard to appearances, and a respect to the publick opinion. But it was the Christian religion, which gave weight to appearances; and invested the publick opinion with its high authority.

THESE facts, and I might easily mention others, must convince you how much society is indebted to divine revelation. It has given a check to cruelty and lust; it has inspired sentiments of the most exalted benevolence; it has taught men to do good in various forms, and to objects that must once have perished; it has delivered many  
weak



weak minds from the terrours of superstition ; and whilst it has increased the number of virtuous persons, it has conferred on them a present reward, by elevating their views to a future happy existence. I would now ask, can you refuse to study a system which has these recommendations ? Men of the most profound understanding, and extensive knowledge, have employed their powers in theological speculations. BOYLE, BACON, LOCKE, and NEWTON were not Christian ministers, yet they studied with ardour the Christian religion. The volume of nature gave them a taste for the volume of revelation.

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Their exalted minds could not acquiesce in the accomplishments of the scholar, without the science of the Christian.

LET me conclude this long letter with a sentiment suggested by Cicero. In his inimitable dialogue on friendship there is this passage : “ Cæteræ res, quæ expetuntur, opportunæ sunt singulæ rebus ferè singulis : divitiæ, ut utare ; opes, ut colare ; honores, ut laudare ; voluptates, ut gaudeas ; valetudo, ut dolore careas, et muneribus fungare corporis. Amicitia res plurimas continet : quoquo te verteris, præsto est, nullo loco excluditur, nunquam intempestiva, nunquam

quam molesta est :——secundas res splendidiores facit amicitia, et adversas partiens communicansque, leviores.” Substituting religion for friendship, I would borrow the language of the great Orator, and say, “ You ask for riches, that you may enjoy them ; for power, that you may be followed ; for preferment, that you may be respected ; for pleasure, that you may be gratified ; for health, that you may be free from pain, and have vigour of body : but religion comprehends many considerations. Go where you will, it is present. No place can shut it out. It is never unseasonable ; never intruding. It

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gives splendour to prosperity; and is a cordial in adversity." This translation may be liberal; but I am sure, the sentiment is just.

FAREWELL.



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**Letter XIV.****MISCELLANEOUS.**

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**Y**OU may have expected, in the course of these letters, some commendations of the art of Oratory, and consequently, some remarks on declaiming, which is a college-exercise; and which is one of the means of acquiring this art. To be able to speak justly, methodically, floridly, and copiously (which is Cicero's definition of speaking well) is indeed, a great attainment. But how few are there in modern times, who can speak in this manner! The art of printing

printing has given a deep wound to the art of oratory. But we need not esteem this a misfortune; for the eye may be much more conveniently and successfully addressed than the ear.

PUBLICK speaking is not however, wholly superseded by the press. In judicial, legislative, and religious assemblies, there are constant occasions for the exercise of this art. Still I have many doubts, whether it can be taught by any rules hitherto invented. I may mistake; but the ground of my opinion is this, the most unpleasing speakers, according to the judgment of criticks, are  
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some who have studied elocution, with a degree of enthusiasm; and who have taken unwearied pains to be orators. What avail ten thousand rules respecting the attitude of the body, the motion of the hands, and the direction of the eyes? A person who comprehends his subject; who enters into the spirit of it; who has a command of words; an agreeable voice, and a proper confidence in himself, must speak well. Nature will direct his gestures; rules would embarrass him. Some of our best judges of oratorical merit have decided in favour of speakers at the bar. The reason must be, that their manner

manner is less studied, and their elocution more natural, than those of other publick speakers. Dr. Blair, in his Lectures, has undertaken to give a concise history of Eloquence, with a description of its various kinds; and to propose means for improving in it. If you read what he has written on the subject, you may be excused from consulting a more laboured system.

THE poets will sometimes relieve you, when your spirits are exhausted by other studies. If pleased with Fables, amuse yourself with those of Gay and Fontaine. If you prefer Pastorals, take up the Idyls of Theocritus,



ocritus, Moschus, and Bion, translated by Fawkes, Virgil's Eclogues, Pope's Pastorals, and Shenstone's Pastoral Ballad. But to enter into the spirit of this kind of poetry, previously read Blair's xxxix Lecture, and Pope's Preface to his Pastorals.

IN the latter part of the same Lecture, you will find the peculiar character of Lyrick Poetry. Pindar's Odes, by West and Green, Anacreon's and Horace's, Dryden's and Pope's Odes on the power of musick, and others by Warton, Collins, Mason, and Gray, come under this denomination. Milton's Lycidas, Pope's Unfortunate Lady, and Gray's Churchyard,

Churchyard, have the peculiar excellence of Elegiack Poetry.

THE principles of Descriptive and Didactick Poetry are explained in Blair's XL Lecture. When master of his ideas, you will be qualified to discern the beauties of Milton's Allegro and Penferoso, Pope's Windsor Forest, Thompson's Seasons, Akenfide's Pleasures of Imagination, Pope's Essay on Criticism, on Man, his Moral Epistles, his Dunciad and Satires, Young's Night-Thoughts, his Universal Passion, and other approved works of this class.

BLAIR'S XLII and XLIII Lectures will give you a new relish for the  
Epick

Epick Poems of Homer and Virgil ;  
and will help you to form a judgment of Fenelon's Telemachus, Hoole's Tasso, and Milton's Paradise Lost and Regained.

THE laws and principles of Dramatick Poetry are unfolded in Blair's XLV and two following Lectures. Having sufficiently attended to the subject of these Lectures, if you read Potter's Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and Malone's Shakespear, you will behold the dramatick energy ; and reap the richest fruits of ancient and modern genius.

THIS course of poetical studies does not rest solely on my own judgment.

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ment. It is recommended by Milns, in a work entitled the Well-bred Scholar; or Practical Essays on the best methods of improving the Taste, and assisting the Exertions of Youth in literary pursuits. The Monthly Reviewers have made large extracts from this work. And, after a critical analysis, they conclude, that "the book is very sensibly written; and that it contains much useful information."

It will be happy for you, if some college-friend, with similar taste, views, and sentiments with yourself, should accompany you in the several walks of science. Frequent conversations



sations on literary subjects must be very improving. Pursuing the same studies, you may greatly assist each other. Historical reading will supply numerous topicks for conversation. Points in Philosophy, Metaphysick and Morals, may be usefully discussed; and you may interchange knowledge in every branch of polite literature. Mutual communications on college-studies and exercises will strengthen the memory; will fix many fleeting ideas; and convert a transient into a permanent acquisition.

I now close a correspondence, suggested by private friendship, and supported by a sincere regard to the

University.

University. May you be one of those sons, who do honour to their literary parent. The union of VIRTUE and SCIENCE will give you distinction at the present age; and will tend to give celebrity to the name of HARVARD. You will not disappoint the friends, who anticipate your improvements. Your instructors will be gratified; and when you receive the honours of the university, you will have their testimony that you deserve them.

FAREWELL.

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J. C.

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